

Appl. No. 09/708,036

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Final Office Action of December 14, 2004 rejected claims 1-2, 6-8, 13-16, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Abe et al., and indicated that claims 3-5, 9-12, and 17-19 contained allowable subject matter.

The Applicant respectfully disagrees with the claim rejection for the reasons given in the arguments filed on July 16, 2004. However, in order to facilitate advancement of this application to allowance, the claims of this application are amended above to limit them to the subject matter indicated in the Action as being allowable.

More particularly, claims 3, 9, and 17 have been rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of their respective base claims 1, 7, and 15 respectively (there were no intervening claims). Accordingly, claims 3-5, 9-12, and 17-19 are now allowable as indicated in Section 3 of the detailed Action.

Claims 1, 7, and 15 have been cancelled. In addition, claims 2 and 6 have been amended to depend from claim 3; claims 8, 13, and 14 have been amended to depend from claim 9; and claims 16 and 20 have been amended to depend from claim 17. Accordingly, these amended claims 2, 6, 8, 13, 14, 16, and 20 are now also believed to be allowable with the claims from which they now depend.

Accordingly, all of claims 2-6, 8-14, and 16-20 as now amended and retained in this application are believed to be allowable.

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In view of the foregoing, early favorable consideration of this application is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

MARK S. WIGHT ET AL

By 

James McGraw

Reg. No. 28,168

Tel.: 613 232 2486 ext. 310

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JMc/RJB/wfs